

## Minutes of the LRRHAA AGM held on 3 November 2014

**Present:** Ian.Matten (President), Colin Sharp (Chair), Arnold Harpin (Treasurer), David Penwarden (Trustee), Andrew Benfield (Trustee).

**Committee members:** Phil Hart, Corinne Grimley Evans, Pearl Bevan, Paul Wavell (Lettings), Devendre Khimding (Nepalese rep)

Members: Manuela Fernandes, John Grimley Evans, Terry Kirkby, Colin Cavey, Lorin Watt, Liz Foster-Hall, David Palmer, Terry Pike, Nicky Brooks, Jamie Wakeham, Suzy Jepson,

1. **Apologies:** Cathy Gibbs, Nick van Hear, Bill Whaley, Jon Piggot, Theresa Gurl,

2. **Minutes of AGM 2013:** Read and approved

3. **Matters arising:** Covered in the minutes below

### Special Agenda item re Election of Officers (item 6)

Trustee D Penwarden, on behalf of all three Trustees who were present, stated that it been brought to their attention that errors had been made in the implementation of Constitution rules in that:

a. The five-year maximum for continuous service by officers and committee members had not been observed for a number of years, and several are technically time-expired, and,

b. Owing to an error in advertising the AGM and calling for nominations only three days before the meeting rather than the seven required by the Constitution, the three nominations for Committee positions, although given in good faith, were invalid.

In debate several members questioned the utility of the five-year rule given that officers and committee members have to be re-elected annually and it would be foolish to insist on officers and committee members being made to stand down from a job they were doing well when there would often be a shortage of volunteers to replace them. Terry Kirkby suggested that the time-expired officers and committee members should stand down with immediate effect but there was no support expressed for this suggestion.

To settle this issue, a resolution was put from the floor "That in dealing with item 6 on the agenda (election of officers) [i] Standing Orders should be Suspended [ii] no elections undertaken at this meeting [iii] an Emergency General Meeting (EGM) should be held within six months at which the main business should be agreement on a reconsidered Constitution and the carrying out of appropriate elections [iv] officers and committee members should continue in the status of "acting" holders of their current positions until the EGM."

Proposed by John Grimley Evans, seconded by Colin Cavey, Terry Pike and Nick Brooks. The motion was carried nem. con. (Voting: For 20; Against 0; Abstention 1).

It was agreed that the EGM should take place on 16 February 2015 at which, as well as the election of officers, draft changes to the Constitution about Committee membership should be approved.

3. **Chairman's Report:** The Chairman apologised on behalf of himself and the Committee for their failure to observe the requirements of the Constitution. He thanked all for coming especially as the attendance was better than last year.

**Deaths:** The sad news that over the past year 4 active members had passed away namely: Adrian Scrivens - Field Secretary, Norman Gurl – Trustee, Robin Adams - Field Secretary and Michael Fernandes - Field Secretary and, Honorary Trustee. All given their time to enhance the allotment as a whole, and will be greatly missed.

**Grant Information:** £100 from OCC last year for hedging is still waiting to be spent pending the removal of the sycamores on the Glebe Boundary and £700 was approved by OCC to go towards the lock.(see para 12). The Association received £750 from the Community Regeneration Grant last year for the marquee, sleepers for car park and memorial bench. This year, £1200 was received for raised beds with parking area to be constructed by Brookes' architectural students. More work needs to be done to finish this project but once complete the beds will be a most useful community asset.

**Parties:** Summer and Winter parties took place last year but it was agreed to hold only Summer parties on the field in the future: they do not incur venue hire charges and attract many new allottees.

**Theft:** A little this year. The Chairman asked all to be vigilant and to challenge anyone whom members did not recognise.

**Wildlife area:** The area has progressed well. The aim is to have an untamed area and a wildflower “meadow”. Many allottees, especially Robin Adams and Colin Cavey have put in a great deal of effort. Simon Read has agreed to lead on the area.

**Thanks:** The Chairman thanked the allottees for the work put in over the year in particular Colin Cavey, Terry Pike, Terry Kirkby for the mowing, Pearl Bevan for organising parties and Ken Barton, for reviving Michael's bench, and finally, all the committee who tirelessly perform their duties enabling the allotment to run smoothly.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report:**

Detailed accounts are attached. If all goes to plan there should be a surplus £319 at the end of this financial year. The treasurer warned that while this does not give much headroom, it will meet day to day requirements..

This year for the first time, Allottees were asked to pay their rent by bank transfer and this was successful: the Treasurer asked that more use this method in future to save unnecessary hassle.

#### **5. Shop Report**

Between Sep 2013 and June 2014, the Shop took £850 and as of 24 Sep, when the bank account was finally transferred to Jon Piggott there was £339.50 in stock and £1103.25 in the bank/cash.

#### **6. Election of officers**

In accordance with the Resolution reported above the following will continue in an acting capacity until the EGM on 16 February 2015:

**President:** Ian Matten

**Trustees:** Andrew Benfield, David Penwarden and Ian Matten

**Chair:** Colin Sharp

**Treasurer:** Arnold Harpin

**Secretary:** VACANT,

**Field Secretary:** Not to be replaced – unless there is a volunteer.

**Lettings Secretary:** Paul Wavell

**Committee Members:** Corinne Grimley Evans, Pearl Bevan, Nick van Hear, Phil Hart.

**Co-opted Committee members (not for election):**

Mr Khimding (Nepalese Community), Jon Piggott (Voluntary Shop Manager)

## **7. 2015 Rent Increase**

It was agreed at the last AGM to increase the rent payable from Sep 2014 by £2 to give some financial headroom but as OCC rent to be paid wef Sep 2016 is similar to what is paid now, and costs should remain within budget, the Committee's proposal is that there should be no rent increase from September 2015. This was voted upon and agreed.

## **8. Site Audits**

The Committee realises that individual allottees will run their plots to their own satisfaction, but the rules should be adhered to. There is no monitoring system in place and now with the absence of a Field Secretary there is a requirement to ensure that all plots are being managed and not neglected. This task requires a team led by an allottee or a Committee member. Nick van Hear has volunteered to be the Committee member along with Terry Pike, Jamie Wakeham but we still need another 3 or 4 volunteers to make the system work.

## **9. Rent and Late Payers.**

There have been a few late payers this year and the change to rule 24 agreed last year was implemented. That said, chasing them still entails a lot of hassle and the Committee will discuss whether the £5 fine should be increased to £10.

## **10. Constitution and Rules**

The Chairman reminded the meeting that both the Rules and Constitution had been approved at the last AGM but there was discussion about an amendment to Rule 35a about fruit trees which the Committee agreed to re-examine. Amendments to the Constitution will be proposed at the EGM on 16 February 2015.

## **11. Levy in lieu of work.**

The August newsletter suggested system whereby those allottees who do not or do not wish to assist with the administration or maintenance of the site by giving four hours assistance on communal tasks, usually at the working mornings should pay a levy of between £5 and £10. The Committee maintains a list of those allottees who have come to the working parties or contributed in other ways since last September. In general discussion it was agreed that the Committee should continue to monitor the level of allottee assistance in communal tasks and that the introduction of a levy should be discussed at Committee in the New Year so that, if necessary, it can come into force next September with the continuing renewal of rental being conditional on work being done or the charge being paid. The Chairman reminded the meeting that work does not have to be carried out on the Sunday working parties, and asked that allottees who want to help but who can't at the weekends, should approach a Committee member for work which needs to be done at a time of their choosing.

## **12. Management:**

Without a Field Secretary the Committee has farmed out most of the tasks:

Mowing – Terry Pike and Colin Cavey - Payment agreed £18 twice a year.

Maintenance – Nick Brooks  
Tractor – Andrew Benfield  
Mower/Strimmer rental – contact anyone who has a key to the container or available from shop when open. (Approved users only)

### **13. Gate Lock:**

A successful application for a grant of £700 will go towards a new lock with uncopyable keys as the issue of security is becoming a worry with many “illegal” keys floating around. The new lock with 140 keys will cost £1328.40 and the difference of £628 is more than covered by the money held for key deposits. The cost of the new keys raises the issue of the key deposit as a key bought with the lock will cost £8.50, but one purchased separately will cost £18.80. The Committee has therefore decided that lost keys will incur a charge of £20: deposits for keys for existing allottees will remain at £10, but new allottees will be charged £20. Keys to the new lock will be distributed on a 1 for 1 basis against the old key with a maximum of 2 keys per plot. Plots worked by two people (ie the plot holder + spouse or partner) but which only have one “registered key” will come under the 1 for 1 but will have to pay a deposit of £10.

### **14. Award of the Brewster Cup**

Not to be awarded this year, pending a Committee review.

### **15. Any other business.**

None.

The Chairman thanked all who attended for coming and the meeting closed at 2115